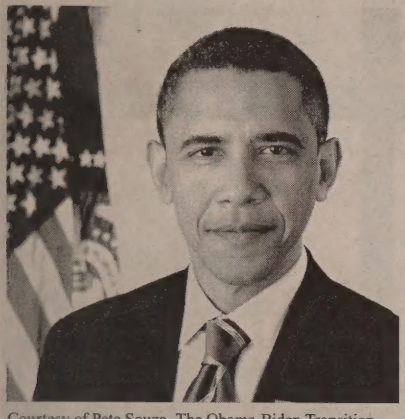
The Musket

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL'S STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1969

Dodgeball for Best Buddies
Students bring back a tradition to raise money for the Best Buddies program, combining competition and fun.
[turn to page 8]

Falling into A Dream Play
Strong acting, symbolism and various special effects play a large part in this year's fall play.
[turn to page 3]

Volume LIV Issue II— Dec 2012



Courtesy of Pete Souza, The Obama-Biden Transition Project

Special Election Section:

Following the close of the 2012 presidential and senatorial campaigns, The Musket has devoted a special section covering the results of the election and the reactions of the LHS student body.
See p. 4 and 5 for in-depth coverage on the 2012 elections.

Sophomores pilot e-books through new iPad program

■ Mark Rosenberg
Soumya Ram
Staff Writers

Staff photo by Arman Bilge

Alex McMullen, a sophomore, uses his iPad to review his homework during his geometry class.

Lexington High School launched an iPad pilot program this year after receiving a $55,000 grant from the Lexington Education Foundation.

The pilot's main purpose is to test the effectiveness of electronic textbooks in the classroom. Fifty sophomore students will incorporate e-textbooks into their studies throughout the 2012-2013 academic year.

The program marks a significant shift in the use of educational technology by Lexington students. Pilots help educators "learn what works and what doesn't," said Thomas Plati, director of education technology and assessment for Lexington Public Schools.

This project is part of a larger goal set by the Obama administration to make e-textbooks available for all students by 2017. Lexington has set a district goal of making half of all textbooks electronic by 2016, Plati said.

Student participants can take advantage of electronic textbooks and tablet applications in class and at home.

Teachers of the students' four major classes will guide them in using the graphics, animations and lectures provided by the iPads. Educators hope they will appeal to various methods of learning by supplying interactive tools.

Additionally, students may find learning to be more fun when paired with technology, encouraging them to explore their subjects independently.

"[Using iPads] increases the ability to reach students, and makes school more exciting," said Marianne McKenna, district technology director of Lexington.

On the other hand, iPads may distract students from learning or be used inappropriately, McKenna added.

To assess these benefits and drawbacks, the program will be monitored throughout the year by various LPS educators and staff members. Progress reports and report cards of the fifty sophomores participating in the program will be analyzed in relation to the previous year.

These students and their parents will also give feedback on the program's impact through surveys, said associate principal Adam Goldberg.

In the future, this program may be expanded to
[IPAD, page 7]

Lasa seeks to increase level of communication with students

■ Nicholas Flynn
Prasuna Cheruku
Staff Writers

After Natalie Cohen announced her retirement as principal of Lexington High School in January 2012, Laura Lasa was appointed to fill Cohen's role. As the former LHS associate principal of five years, Lasa comes into the position with a thorough understanding of LHS.

As principal, Lasa is able to work with the school's administration, faculty and student body more closely than ever before, and has more latitude to influence changes and introduce new policies.

One of Lasa's major goals is to improve communication between the school and faculty, as well as to increase her accessibility to students. Lasa noted students rarely go to her for assistance because they fear her authority, despite her willingness to work with them.

On Lasa's to-do list:
1. Improve communication between the school and faculty
2. Prove that she is approachable
3. Ease the burden of students and help them realize they don't have to be perfect

Contrary to popular belief, Lasa said her job as principal is not to punish students but to help them. She urged students not be intimidated by her role, but rather embrace the fact that she is open to communication and collaboration.

"Each rung up the ladder I go, the farther I get from students," Lasa said, which is why she strives to connect with students every day.

Junior Anna Ferrick has found this to be true in practice, saying that Lasa's open-minded attitude is welcoming and assuring.

"She doesn't speak to every student the same way," Ferrick said. "She personalizes [her approach] with each individual student, which makes you feel like part of the school."

English teacher Holly Gilligan also found this quality of Lasa helpful on the administrative level, adding that Lasa has a way of making people feel at ease through her interactions with them.

"If a new initiative in the school comes up, she uses ... her past experience with kids as an example to shape the idea and explain its significance," said Gilligan.

Another one of Lasa's upcoming initiatives is to ease the burden of students' lives. With such a competitive environment at LHS, she said she wishes students would put less pressure on themselves to be perfect.

Nevertheless, Lasa respects the challenges that high schoolers face. She enjoys working with them "because of their realness, honesty, [and] courage through their difficult lives" and because personal interactions with students often result in more relaxed and fun conversations.

With the goals of opening avenues of communication and reducing student stress in mind, Lasa said she looks forward to hearing feedback from students and teachers alike and using it to improve throughout the coming year.

Dance ban enacted to protect student safety

■ Mayukha Karnam
Crissy Leach
Staff Writers

In reaction to the increasing concern of alcohol and drug use at school dances, the Lexington High School administration has temporarily banned dances in an effort to keep students safe. By no means is it an ideal solution, but it's the best one for now.

The problem became apparent over the past year as many students began to come to school dances under the influence. The result? The sound of sirens as several students were rushed to the hospital. At the risk of endangering student safety, administrators decided that dances could not continue as they were and enacted the ban this year.

Yet there has been a tremendous negative reaction to this protective measure, with students protesting the administration's overreaching restriction on the majority of students who have done nothing wrong. It's true that there are flaws in the dance ban: students who don't engage in inappropriate behavior are punished despite their responsibility, and Class Council and various clubs lose their main source of fundraising for major events. To this end, it may seem like the administration has slammed an unnecessarily heavy fist.

But let's step back and reconsider. We as students of LHS know better than anyone that our school has always promoted independence and rational thinking. So why is the administration restricting us now?

The answer is a reasonable one. The faculty and administrators who supervise these school-sanctioned dances are responsible for every single student's safety, and students under the influence are far from innocuous. Even students who don't engage in inappropriate behavior are at

[DANCE, page 7]

Students pressured to take overload of AP classes

■ Hannah Kwon
Staff Writer

Lexington High School is rated as the second best high school in the Boston suburbs by Boston Magazine's "Boston's Best Schools 2012." We excel in its ranking criteria with our 17 AP course offerings, a high SAT average of 1894 and high MCAS scores.

As a result of our high-achieving culture, LHS students are pressured to take many AP classes, along with impressive extracurriculars.

Last year, LHS earned a place on College Board's AP Honor Roll. The honor distinguishes LHS as a school whose number of AP classes is increasing and whose number of students earning scores of 3 or above on the AP exams is steadily growing. But our intensifying AP culture is detrimental in a high school setting.

One argument for taking AP classes is that good performance on the official exams earns you college credit at certain universities. But this makes going the extra mile to get into college seem ironic when, in a way, you're getting out of it. Not to mention the stress of studying to earn the score of 4 or 5 that most colleges set as a baseline for awarding course credit.

However, most students overload themselves with APs because they believe it looks good on their college application. For our generation, the standard, "You play a varsity sport, you have a 4.0 GPA, you're in!" no longer applies in a dog-eat-dog world full of increasingly hardworking students.

We see the acceptance rates of our elite dream schools declining and, in an attempt to stand out from the rest of our classmates, we decide that taking college-level courses is the best strategy. So we add yet another heavy load of AP coursework to our already stressful lives. In reality, however, the burden of too many AP classes can harm us in the long run.

For most of us, high school will be a period of time we reminisce about when we're older. It is going to be re-

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Alumni Flashback: Zeybekoglu's art class inspires Novelline to pursue career in fashion design

■ Ryan Jude Novelline
Guest Columnist
Class of 2008

"You have sixty seconds starting … now!"

Mrs. Zeybekoglu turned toward the clock looming over the classroom and left me staring at a clean, white paper the size of a movie banner strewn across the table. Waving a giant paintbrush, I threw splashes of black ink across the page. Just behind the table was a still-life display of dusty fabric, a trombone, a bowler hat and glass wine bottles balanced against a cardboard box.

Squinting at the forms before me, pressured and desperate, I did not see the objects, but instead, the weight of a single, clunky mass. The time constraint did not allow for trepidation, but demanded fearlessness. In that minute, I splashed the ebony water all over the table and myself, staining my gray T-shirt. At the end, a handsome still life lay exhausted on the table.

"Very good!" she said. I had been her student for one semester, but this was the first time she reacted with such praise. An instructor had never before pushed me into translating an image of feeling rather than of sight, and that day I made an exhilarating discovery about making art. While drawing had always been a passion of mine, I had never before had someone question my process and challenge my limits.

With a month until col-

[ALUMNI, page 7]

Acting drives play despite cryptic plot

■ Sarah Zhang
Annie Ma
Staff Writers

Staff photo by Arman Bilge

Alfred (Tim Childs, a senior), a bank officer is restrained by his office assistants (Will Lockwood, a senior, and Katrina Chaput, a freshman) with a bystander (Patrick Neal, a senior) in the foreground.

This year's fall play, "A Dream Play," directed by drama teacher Jillian Singer, was a confusing yet thrilling interpretation of August Strindberg's 1901 production of the same name. Though the storyline was obscured by complex plot twists and cryptic symbolism, the play was well-performed and had impressive special effects.

The plot focuses on the dream of main character Alfred (Tim Childs), a bank officer. In his dream, Agnes (senior Rebecca Weiser), the daughter of the gods descends from the heavens to experience human life and helps Alfred discover important aspects of his life.

"This play is a little — not necessarily confusing, just so surreal and abstract that instead of trying to figure out what's going on, hopefully the audience embraces the idea of it being a dream," said Childs.

Symbolism played a prominent role, demanding active audience interpretation and contributing to the overall ambiguity of the play.

"If you are paying attention, you should be able to catch a lot of the symbolism," Serena Lehman, a sophomore who plays Alfred's wife, Victoria, said. "I guess it just depends on how attentive an audience member you are."

Intricate dialogue waxing Shakespearean poetic added

[PLAY, page 7]

Staff photo by Arman Bilge

Sophomore Charlie Coburn, senior Pawinn Songtachalert (hidden), sophomore Noah Virgile and senior Alex Sheena appear as the Barbershop Quartet in the production "Breeches, Bloomers, Bellbottoms, Oh My!"

Fashion revue showcases styles throughout the ages

■ Cathy Ouyang
Evaline Han
Staff Writers

As part of the nine-month-long celebration of Lexington's tercentennial, a musical fashion revue was held on Oct. 27 at Lexington High School, in honor of the past 300 years of Lexington's fashion history.

Co-produced by Lexington residents Tanya Morrisett and Jessie Steigerwald and written by Steigerwald, "Breeches, Bloomers, Bellbottoms, Oh My!" was a fundraiser for the anniversary celebrations, selling tickets, snacks and clothing articles, as well as hosting a silent auction.

With 150 actors, 21 scenes and five musical numbers, the town production used a classroom setting to capture the changing fashions for seasons, sports, uniforms, formal occasions and school in Lexington over the ages. The revue was framed as a school history project in the class of "Room 300," showcasing the evolution of clothing styles from colonial times through the 1980s. Among the articles displayed were undergarments, bike wear, tennis outfits and swimwear.

The musical fashion revue was an idea that originated one and a half years ago.

"We had a community meeting in town," said Morrisett. "My friend Jessie was up there, and somehow in the meeting we said, 'We should have a fashion show,' and we

[FASHION, page 7]

Rising Clubs at LHS

Ski and Ride Club

By Erin Lee and Andrea Michaelson

For the first time since its disbandment 10 years ago, the Lexington High School Ski and Ride Club returned this year, offering students interested in skiing and snowboarding the chance to hit the slopes with their friends.

Riders of all levels are invited as long as they share a common goal: to have fun.

"If you're a beginner, there's tons of training you can learn, and if you're advanced, there's tons of stuff that's just fun to ride," said club president Cole Oshiro-Leavitt, a junior.

Weekly Friday meetings in room 403 have consisted of watching ski videos and planning for the club's first ski trip this season.

Club adviser and chemistry teacher Janice Compton attested to the new club's rising popularity. The sign-up list, she said, has already grown to two pages and the meetings she oversees are filled with eager students.

"It's a nice way to connect with other students and to make friends with common interests," she said.

The club, however, aims to be more than just a way for "ski bums" to get out on the snow. Oshiro-Leavitt believes that the monthly trips will serve as valuable social opportunities as well.

"One of the great things is, you get on a chairlift with someone you've probably never met and you're sitting two inches away from them. How can you not talk to them?" he said. "It's a very social experience."

The club has yet to tackle its first snowfall, but hopes are high for this winter and Oshiro-Leavitt encourages anyone to give the club a try.

"As long as you have the will to do it, you can come," he said.

Charity: Water

By Elizabeth Case and Elizabeth Kane

Charity: Water is a budding club at Lexington High School that raises money to help third-world countries in Asia and Africa access water.

Although the club started off small, it is now in its third year with around 20 members who are eager to reach their goals.

The Charity: Water umbrella organization strives to aid 800,000 people and at least 20 countries through donations to build freshwater wells, rainwater catchments and sand filters.

The Charity: Water club has raised money in various ways in the past, including running a donation booth at Asian Night.

"We've done a lot of fundraisers and bake sales," said, club advisor and math teacher Rachel LeBlanc.

Vivian Zhang, a senior and co-founder, added that Charity: Water hopes to expand its fundraising options.

"[We are] currently considering the idea of placing donation jars in local restaurants," she said.

However, club members are worried about budget deadlines.

"We don't have the past [experience] other clubs have," said senior Alicia Yeung, adding that the time of year plays a role in the budget. "Sometimes there's really good seasons like holiday season. Once it's testing season, we just stop."

Nevertheless, Charity: Water club remains hopeful for future success.

"We're trying to raise $2,000 this year," Zhang said. The club's eventual goal is to raise $5,000, which is "enough to provide water to an entire village."

The club meets Thursdays in room 808.

For more LHS club profiles, see p. 7.

Student Perspectives

"For me, the economy was the most pressing issue."
~ Charles Li, sophomore

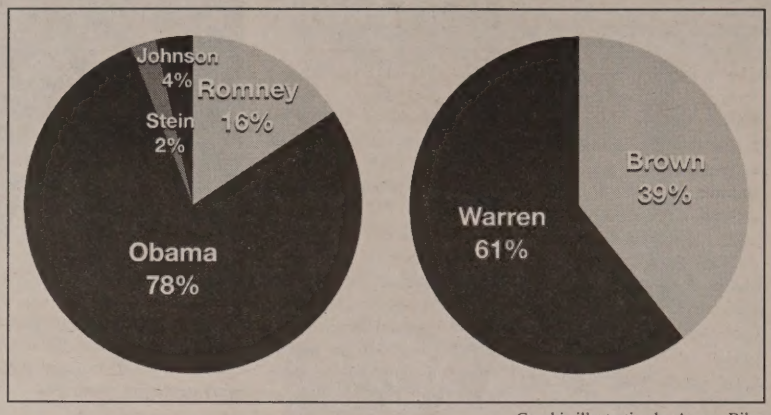
"The ballot questions were much more controversial; I mean the second one, that was defeated by a very slim margin."
~ David Yuan, junior

"I would've voted for Romney. Obama is taking taxes to support the poor. Obamacare is basically giving poor people free services, and it is funded [by] my taxes."
~ Alex Song, freshman

"I thought that the most important issues were social issues, such as whether abortion and gay marriage should be legal."
~ Ben Ye, sophomore

"Everyone wants a good economy, and everyone has a different approach."
~ Sophia Hancock, junior

LHS Mock Election Results



Graphic illustration by Arman Bilge

The results from the Lexington High School mock election are in; Barack Obama won the presidential election and Elizabeth Warren took the senate seat. Both secured over 60% of the total votes in their respective races.

The mock election received votes from over 1,000 LHS students, portraying the students' views on the presidential and senatorial hopefuls.

The results were overwhelmingly in favor of the Democrats; Obama received 994 of the 1269 total votes, and Warren won 739 votes out of the 1220 senate votes. This came as no surprise, given that Lexington, and Massachusetts as a whole, is extremely liberal. Additionally, Lexington resident and Green Party candidate Jill Stein received 31 votes, while 45 students voted for Libertarian Party candidate Gary Johnson.

Compared to the actual election, the results generated the same outcome, but with vastly different margins. Obama won 303 electoral votes to Romney's 206, while securing a little over half of the popular vote. Warren received only 54% of Massachusetts's votes, slightly edging out the incumbent, Scott Brown.

Analysis by Michael Heyang and Richard Huang
Poll conducted by Robert Collins/LHS social studies department

Student Perspectives

"They spent too much time bashing each other! Do some real stuff!"
~ Serena Luo, sophomore

"I voted for Obama [in the mock election]. He's a cool guy. In terms of actual policies, I agree that Romney is a flip-flopper, so I don't trust him with our country."
~ Preetham Chippada, sophomore

"I think the most important issue was the choice between moving forward or backward, both economically and socially."
~ Tim Schoch, sophomore

"I voted for Jill Stein [in the mock election]. There are more than two types of views on every issue, and voting for a third-party candidate is the best way to show that."
~ Zachary Steigerwald-Schnall, freshman

WBZ political analyst Jon Keller offers objective insight on role of news media in 2012 elections

■ Ayesha Harisinghani
Mandy Quan
Staff Writers

On Nov. 1, students in history teacher Larry David's U.S. Government and Politics class had the opportunity to meet WBZ TV and radio political analyst Jon Keller, who moderated one of the senatorial debates between Elizabeth Warren and Scott Brown.

Through Keller's niece Augie Sherman, a junior in the politics class, arrangements were made for his visit to Lexington High School.

As Keller's visit was shortly before the election, the discussion between Keller and the students was mainly focused on the upcoming presidential and senatorial elections. However, Keller also answered questions about his personal life and his thoughts about various political issues.

"Getting the perspective and opinion of a person who is embedded in the media which we all consume was fresh and insightful," wrote Alan Bartels, a senior in the class, in an email.

Like his students, David was very pleased that his class had the opportunity to speak with Keller. David said it was great to have someone who had an "outside perspective" come in and found the "celebrity factor" to be "humanizing."

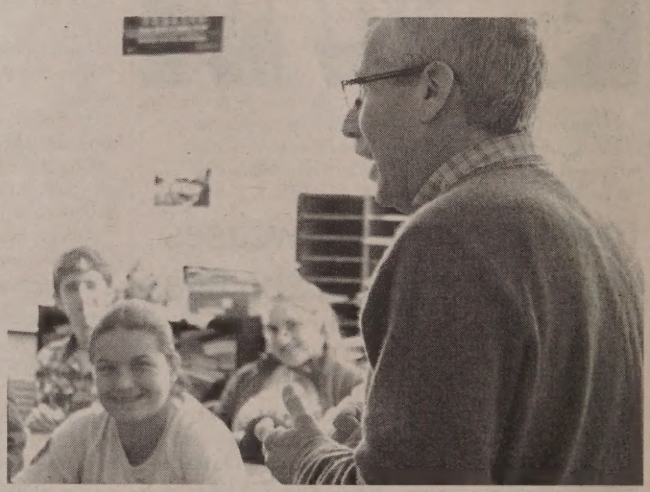
Keller was the fifth speaker to visit the class this year; others included campaign speakers from both Scott Brown's and Elizabeth Warren's election campaigns, a staff member of Rep. Ed Markey, and the candidate Tom Tierney himself.

Unlike other guest speakers, Keller did not espouse his personal views or political preferences. Instead, he spoke from an analytical standpoint.

"I read some conservative and some liberal magazines, [a] few bloggers from either side," said Keller during the discussion. "It takes some effort but it's doable. I'm not interested in carrying water for a candidate."

Later in the discussion, Keller revealed that he does not decide who he will vote for in elections until he is in the car, on his way to the polls.

Students like senior Sydney Abrams reacted to this admission positively, noting he "clearly wasn't biased," but rather viewed politics from behind a more objective lens.



Staff photo by Susie Kim

Jon Keller, WBZ TV and radio political analyst and moderator of one of the senatorial debates between Elizabeth Warren and Scott Brown, speaks to students in the U.S. Politics and Government course about the 2012 presidential and senatorial elections.

David agreed, saying he appreciated having an impartial speaker from the media come to talk to the class, since many media experts tend to lean towards one side or another.

"People are drinking the Kool-Aid, buying [the biased news], but the news doesn't give it to them straight," he said. "It was nice to get something not from echo chambers, left or right."

Keller's unique perspective as a debate moderator also intrigued students.

"I was just blown away," said Abrams. "It was so cool to meet this guy in person who's actually doing real stuff, interacting with real politicians [and] reporting on real news."

collegebored

Obama's financial policies bode well for college-bound students burdened by costs

■ Matt Lee
Columnist

The elections are over. Barack Obama is the 44th president of the United States, and there remains a Republican majority in the House of Representatives and a Democratic majority in the Senate.

But what does it all mean for us? With people like you and me being thrown into the world every year, fresh out of college with hundreds of thousands of dollars of debt under their belts, one wonders.

Let's look at what Obama has done before for students trying to pay for higher education. According to Whitehouse.gov, he's raised the maximum Pell Grant award to $5,635. Anyone can apply for Pell Grants to pay for college (Yeah, guys, that's us!).

He has instituted a "Pay As You Earn" plan, where students can pay back their loans with a reasonable maximum at 10 percent of their monthly income. He has established new tax credit opportunities, which give families of students tax breaks as they pay off loans. His goal is for America to have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020.

The future isn't all puppies and rainbows, though. The federal fairy tale is about to experince a plot twist: the fiscal cliff (cue dramatic music). It sounds ominous, but for a good reason. In January, not only will the tax cuts that Bush implemented expire and hike rates for many Americans, but massive budget cuts will take place as well, taking money away from federally funded education, food inspections and air travel safety, as CNN reports. If the government can't find a solution to the cliff (cue dramatic music again), those cuts will affect us all.

Here's what all this financial mumbo-jumbo means for me and you: Obama wants to help. But put together this situation with the fiscal cliff and a divided Congress that may block the president's efforts, and those of us applying to college in the next four years will have to accept that we won't be on the top of the list right away.

It may be that the best we can hope for is that Obama's way of helping out those trying to pay for higher education will be to defend the ground he's already gained, and to not make any radical changes. Yet.

According to Whitehouse.gov again, the president's plan for the future includes promoting reasonable tuition costs by helping those colleges devoted to keeping tuition low, and proposing a $1 billion investment that will allow states to continue to support their universities.

When it comes to learning, the folks in the Obama administration not only want to help you pay for it, but they also want to improve the way American higher education works.

Though the president may have one or two bigger things to worry about than the price tag of your education, don't sweat it. If your sights are set on college, you have friends in high places.

Uneven political balance creates barriers for conservative students

■ Isaiah Lee-Shin
Bryn Weiler
Staff Writers

Lexington, which prides itself on progressive, liberal and open-minded views, is not as embracing when it comes to diverging political beliefs. If we expect our leaders to consider each other's ideas fairly, we also have an obligation to consider the ideas of our peers.

Many Republicans in Lexington — and especially at Lexington High School — find their opinions on political matters are harshly judged or even dismissed by liberal students. In the classroom, only a small handful of conservative students voice their opinions on the election, for fear of scrutiny. Many were unavailable even for interview as a result of such fears.

"It's definitely not the best place for a Republican to be ... There are times in my history class where everyone jokes and jeers at Republican ideals, and it kind of scares me a bit at how heavily Democratic the majority of the people are," said Christine Sim, a junior who does not support Romney but considers herself Republican.

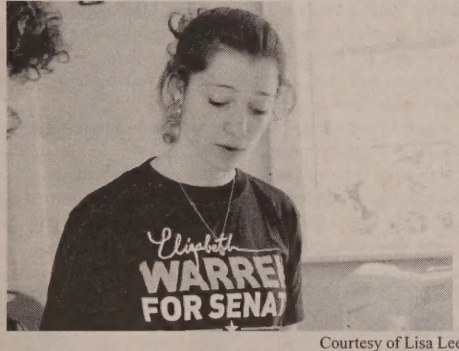
Youths in general lean towards the left, but due to the liberal nature of Lexingon, the separation at LHS is even stauncher. According to the school's mock election, 78.3% of students voted for the incumbent Democratic leader, Barack Obama, while only 15.7% voted for Mitt Romney, with Obama winning by a staggering margin of about 5:1. Fueled by overwhelming support from fellow left-leaning Lexingtonians, students can easily fall into the mindset that their beliefs must be right.

"I think that conservatives need to try harder a little to move forward," said freshman Leo Yu. "Times change; so should political ideals ... and liberal views can apply [better] to modern society."

Without getting into specific policies, this is a strong argument for Democrats and one that certainly dominates the LHS student body. Yet Obama only won this election by a 2 percent popular vote margin, indicating that many believe rapid "progression" isn't what is best for the country. At the very least, differing views warrant debate.

Even Lexington has not always had such a strong liberal outlook. According to town historian and AP U.S. History teacher Richard Kollen, Lexington was a very conservative town until Route 2 was built. The resulting influx of people led to a gradual switch in Lexington's political balance, resulting in today's demographics.

One-sided approaches to politics are increasingly common, from the local level to the governmental level. If both sides could compromise for mutual benefit, Washington would be able to think with two heads and not just one. In a time when bipartisanship is necessary to resolve America's clunky government, we must consider the strengths of our conservative peers' ideas before we bash them into oblivion.



Courtesy of Lisa Lee

Talia Rothstein, a senior and intern for the Warren campaign, reviews a list of addresses for canvassing on Election day in the Lexington Historical Society building at Depot Square.

Interns canvassing for senators make a difference in the election

■ Ashvin Antony
Staff Writer

While Lexington High School students followed the election closely, some took an active part by interning with candidates' campaigns.

Seniors Ben Brown and Talia Rothstein were two students who interned with state senator-elect Mike Barrett and U.S. senator-elect Elizabeth Warren's political campaigns, respectively.

Brown interned for the Barrett campaign over the summer after finding out through word of mouth.

"I had a few friends who were in this government class at the school and [Mike Barrett] came in and talked to them and said that he wanted some interns for the summer," said Brown.

Though Brown did not know much about Barrett before the internship, he wanted to gain experience working for a political campaign.

"I emailed [the Mike Barrett campaign] and they offered me an internship, which I took," said Brown.

As a supporter of Warren, Rothstein interned for the U.S. Senate candidate's campaign. She found out about the internship opportunity when a fellow student made an announcement that the campaign was seeking more interns.

"I emailed the campaign coordinator for the Lexington, Arlington and Watertown area," she said. "The coordinator asked me for a resumé ... and then I had a phone interview where she asked me a couple [of] questions."

Despite the long hours of canvassing and tremendous commitment required, Brown and Rothstein felt accomplished after both Barrett and Warren won their respective races.

Brown and Rothstein helped their candidates run successful campaigns in various ways, spending numerous days canvassing and making phone calls to voters.

Canvassing is a common method of soliciting votes during political campaigns. It involves a campaign team knocking on the doors of a target group of individuals to engage in personal interaction with them.

During his internship, Brown woke up early twice a week to canvass in the towns that Barrett was going to represent.

"Each day I would drive out with a canvassing partner to the towns around the district," he said. "We canvassed in Bedford as well as many other towns."

Rothstein also devoted a significant amount of time canvassing for Warren.

"The campaign made a huge effort to get a large voter turnout," she said. "Four or five of us from LHS worked a minimum of five hours a week canvassing. In the early weeks we were collecting information, asking people who were you supporting, do you know who you're supporting yet, etc."

After all the hours of canvassing and phone calling, both students felt their hard work played a significant

[INTERN, page 7]

Rising Clubs at LHS

« Heifer International Club »

By: Kristin Tissera and Grace Wu

Founded this year by senior Sameera Chippada, Heifer International Club raises money and awareness for people in third world countries who are living in poverty.

Funds raised that will go to the Heifer International organization which provides fresh drinking water and livestock such as heifers to communities in need. It is a charity that Chippada's family is devoted to, but she has found it is unknown to her peers.

"Partially the reason [I started the club] was to spread knowledge to people," she said. "A lot of people have heard of it but a lot of people also haven't, and also at the same [time to raise] money to support other people, so it's a mix of awareness and fundraising."

To brainstorm ways to fundraise, the Heifer International Club meets on Thursdays from 3 to 3:30 p.m. Club members describe the club as relatively low-key and an enjoyable experience.

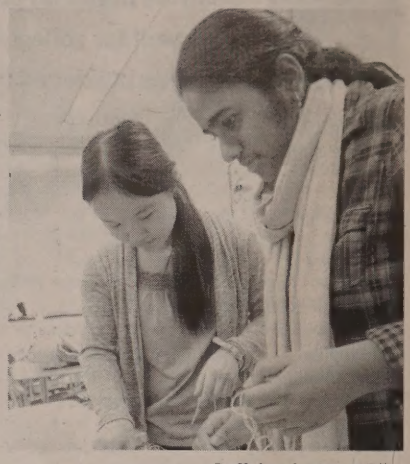
"I love the club," said Ayaka Miyamoto, a freshman and club member. "You get to help people in need while you're having fun and making friends."

Fellow member Krista Hu, a senior, echoed similar thoughts.

"It's not like you have to be there every single week, so it's not like the biggest commitment ever, and it's not hard to put in time," she said.

Heifer International Club already has fundraising ideas planned which are ready to launch into action. They are currently selling friendship bracelets and planning to organize donation boxes and bake sales.

"It's pretty free-form. We basically just get together every week and we talk and plan ways to make money, but it's really chill," said Chippada.



Staff photo by Arman Bilge

Winnie Chang, a senior, and Vineetha Bheemarasetty, a sophomore, create friendship bracelets at Heifer International Club.

« Bhangra Club »

By: Serena Hajjar and Katie Chen

After a decade-long absence, the Lexington High School Bhangra Club was brought back to life this year by Aushee Khamesra, a sophomore, and Vyoma Sahani, a freshman.

Bhangra is a type of Indian dance and, for members of the club, a way to share an aspect of Indian culture and express their passion for it.

"I want to bring out Indian culture and spread the dance style because it's a really energetic dance and anyone can do it," said Khamesra.

Both presidents have had previous experience with bhangra. This includes several performances at Indian festivals and, for Khamesra, classes from a former club president. Sahani has performed at the Hatch Shell in Boston for a crowd of 1,000 people.

A typical meeting at the Bhangra Club begins with a warm-up, after which members are divided into two groups led by either Khamesra or Sahani. They review basic dance steps such as wheat, sunset, sunrise and dhol, and then start choreographing. The meeting concludes with updates on costumes and performance dates.

"It's a good environment because we get to learn but we're also having fun," added Shreeya Chandra, a freshman member.

The club already has plans for upcoming performances.

"We are thinking about performing at the talent show and Asian Night," said Khamesra.

The Bhangra Club meets in room 808 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. every Monday. The club's faculty adviser is Jim Williams, a math teacher.

Staff photo by Arman Bilge

Aushee Khamesra, a sophomore and a president of the Bhangra Club, leads members in a dance while rehearsing during their meeting.

« Ukulele Club »

By: Christine Kim and Susie Kim

Wanting to bring a unique type of music to Lexington High School, juniors Brian Chirn and Vivien Chen, started the Ukulele Club this year.

The club was created for students to learn how to play the instrument and share their love of music.

"The ukulele is like a guitar, but smaller," said JiMin Ko, a sophomore club member. "It's easy to play and fun."

Chen, the club's vice president, said inspiration to create the club came from club president Chirn and his personal experience with the instrument.

"Brian learned how to play the ukulele over the summer and wanted to expand it to his friends and the LHS community," said Chen.

Chen was able to help start the club by reaching out to enlist the club's adviser, English teacher Jennifer Cohen, who was already familiar with the ukulele.

"I actually liked the instrument as I have seen folk groups perform with it and it is just a unique instrument," said Cohen. "It's also easy to learn, so I thought it would be fun to see people try this new instrument that's just really fun to play."

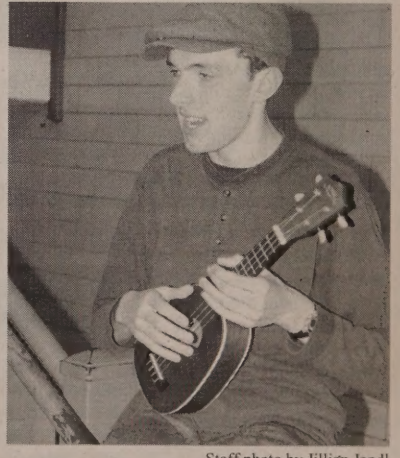
Cohen described members as friendly and accepting, with a common passion for the ukulele.

The club is still in the planning stage, but Chen and Chirn already have some goals for the group in mind.

"I expect it to be casual and friendly," said Chen. "Later on, I wish for the club to play at nursing homes and also participate in the NHS Talent Show."

Chirn added, "I'd also want to have a consistent group [that] want[s] to have fun and perhaps form a ukulele quartet."

The club meets every Tuesday in Room 239 from 2:30 to 3 p.m.



Staff photo by Jillian Jandl

Liam Hefferman, a sophomore, describes the differences between his pineapple ukulele and other types of ukuleles to members of the Ukulele Club.

For more LHS club profiles, see p. 3.

IPAD - PAGE 1

other LPS schools. However, the expense of iPads and the vast number of students in the system will force the pairing of students and educational technology to grow in phases. Educators hope to launch Lexington ahead in its use of technology, applying the potential that the iPad brings to other technology such as the ELMOs and SmartBoards already present in the town's classrooms.

Goldberg called the program "one of the most significant mergers of technology and students that we've seen at this high school." He believes that pairing students with iPads is "a pioneering effort ... that may lay the foundation for this school's future."

LHS administrators see the sophomore iPad pilot as an exciting opportunity for students to acquire knowledge more rapidly and to get more enjoyment out of the learning process.

"One-to-one initiatives are the future," said McKenna.

"Technology is here to stay," added Plati.

AP - PAGE 2

membered as "the years in which I met my first love" or "the first time I realized that I wanted to be an architect." So why substitute that time, so full of opportunities and life-changing decisions, for a full-on college life we are not meant to be ready for? High school should be a period of students' lives focused on the present, not fixated on college.

Instead, maxed-out kids eagerly try to take the most APs possible, with only the goal of impressing colleges. Without the burden of taking all AP classes, students could discover what they truly love doing, and later in life be successful in enjoyng their work.

A healthy alternative would be to only take AP classes that interest you. If history is your passion, then take an AP history class. If you take an AP in a subject you know you do not enjoy, you end up with a lower-than-expected grade and an unhappy school year.

High school shouldn't be dominated by AP mania. Colleges and high schools need to remember taking one or maybe two APs is an option, not an expectation.

DANCE - PAGE 2

risk in the presence of intoxicated peers. But with the ban, all students are protected from harm.

Moreover, past dances just weren't fun for a significant portion of the student body. Students' pre-gaming put others physically and emotionally at risk. As Dean David Lautman, the student activities coordinator, shared at a recent Senate open forum, many students reported that they were forced into uncomfortable situations that pressured them to make decisions they later regretted.

Though the dance ban may take away a major source of revenue for student groups, it's a small setback in the big picture. We're intelligent, innovative people. We can adapt and come up with other ways to fundraise that won't violate the right of students to feel safe. The ban on dances might be challenging, but we can overcome it.

As a solution, banning dances is not ideal. But if we want to reclaim our right to dances, we have to work together as a community to form adequate and realistic solutions. We're going to have to shift the LHS dance culture away from dangerous behavior to make school dances what they were meant to be: safe social events where everyone can have fun.

Until then, we'll have to deal with no dances.

FASHION - PAGE 3

started looking at each other like, 'Yeah, let's do that.' So we did."

For those involved, the production was an enjoyable journey through fashion over the past 300 years.

"I love the diversity, the variety; I love the music and the looks and the ages; I like history," said Thelma Goldberg, a choreographer and the owner of the Dance Inn. "I love the whole concept. Brilliant."

Morrisett agreed it was a great to bring a diverse body of people together.

"I like that there were so many different people, from so many different parts of Lexington, who got together just to have fun," she said. "You name it, we had it here."

LHS students who were involved not only had the chance to perform, but also share in the revelry of a community celebration.

"It's a musical where all the different generations can come together, and have fun celebrating all the different years," added Amy Morrisett, a sophomore who played the character Cassandra.

PLAY - PAGE 3

another level of complexity to the play.

"A lot of the dialogue is completely nonsensical and sounds beautiful because it's written in a very poetic, unique way," said Childs.

The play opened to the sound of rain as Alfred stood alone, contemplating a briefcase before him, and quickly intensified with his wife's sudden entrance into premature labor. The scene was accompanied with dubstep and violin that was oddly effective in magnifying the emotional discord of the moment.

After a perplexing scene in which Alfred threw his papers on the floor, the dream sequence and enigmatic symbolism began. As the line between reality and fantasy blurred, the plot became increasingly convoluted. The introduction of Agnes into Alfred's dream only further confused the story.

One bizarre but entertaining moment in the play occurred when the characters broke out into the popular "Single Ladies" dance by Beyoncé. The scene brought a refreshing dose of comic relief to the play, and the serious expressions the actors maintained only caused the audience to break out into more hoots of laughter.

Though the story itself was obfuscated by the combination of unexpected plot developments, murky symbolism and quixotic language, it was the actors' top-notch performances that carried the show. With believable facial expressions and excellent line delivery, Childs and others succeeded in bringing otherwise absurd characters to life.

The strong acting was complemented by the use of timely spotlights, well-picked music and flying objects, all of which made for an intriguing and thought-provoking production.

THANK YOU

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ALUMNI - PAGE 3

lege applications were due, each morning at 7 a.m. Mrs. Z worked with me to compile a portfolio. Before her assistance, creating art to me meant crafting the most photo-realistic colored-pencil drawing in order to win the Scholastic Art Awards' Gold Key. I realized how much more I needed to learn, not only about creating art but also about understanding myself.

In these early morning art sessions with Mrs. Z, I started to respond to the strength of my own voice, the most powerful device at my disposal. Recognizing and maximizing one's own potential, like the ancient board game of Go or Othello, takes a minute to learn and a lifetime to master. The true gift of my education was receiving the guidance to trust my instincts and, artistically, have the confidence to take risks and fail. The true source of creativity.

Four years later, a week after my senior year of RISD had finished, I was kneeling in a pile of broken glass mirrors with a glue gun, delirious from sleep deprivation. We were minutes away from the photo shoot for my final collection of dresses after a year of constant work. That morning, I was still assembling the garments. The five looks illustrated the Iroquois legend of the beautiful corn husk doll who lost her face as punishment for her flagrant vanity. The experimental project was a celebration of concept, material, form and color, resulting in the culmination of my learnings.

My favorite piece was the final look, a floor length chiffon gown with a bodice created entirely from mirrored glass shards symbolizing the doll's new self-awareness. It was also the riskiest piece. I am amazed my education at LHS built me up to have the confidence to smash a mirror and look at the jagged pieces exploded across the floor and think, "Okay, now I'm going to make a dress out of this."

CORRECTION:

In the article "Tour guides impart town's history" on page five of the previous issue, Xyla Foxlin was incorrectly identified as a tour guide for the Lexington Historical Society. Foxlin is actually a Battle Green Tour Guide for the Town of Lexington.

INTERN - PAGE 5

role in their candidates' victories.

"I felt that I made a difference," said Brown.

Rothstein echoed similar thoughts.

"Pundits keep [saying that] the thing that made a difference was [Warren's] army on the ground," said Rothstein. "We knocked on [more] doors than any Senate race, we made the most number of phone calls and we got [more] donations than any other Senate race in the [United States]."

She added, "If there was an election to get involved in as an intern, this was the one."

OFFBEAT - PAGE 8

train for around three hours before descending. However, their day does not simply end there.

"Afterwards, you go to the athletic center for a workout until 6:00 [p.m.]. These workouts range from normal endurance to strength training to a pool recovery workout," Kofoed wrote. Kofoed also performs a wide range of dynamic stretching before most race runs to help him prepare.

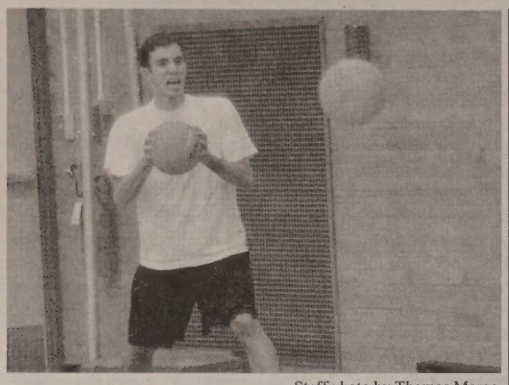
Despite his participation in various races such as the TD Bank Eastern Cup Super G at Burke Mountain and the Mid American Championship in Minnesota, Kofoed wrote that he still does not know the most advanced techniques, so he strives to learn new skills.

"The sport evolves all the time with better ways to move down the hill surface. Currently, I'm trying to learn how to watch where I am skiing," wrote Kofoed. "Your eyes are supposed to lead your skis and it is supposed to help me start my turn and exit in the right place. It sounds easy but with speed and other factors, it ends up being hard."

Even Kofoed's peers know him for his relentless drive.

"Spencer is extremely dedicated to his skiing on and off the mountain," wrote Peter Fucigna, a friend and fellow racer at Waterville Valley, in an email. "His rapid improvement over the five years I have known him is incredible and our training regime is quite difficult."

With this mindset, Kofoed hopes to continue the sport in college on a NCAA Division I ski team and maybe as a professional. But if not, one can always catch him skiing backcountry or spending his days as, he described, "a ski bum hitching helicopter rides to untouched powder fields."



Staff photo by Thomas Marge

Ryan Banard, a junior, participates in the Lexington High School dodgeball tournament.

Dodgeball tournament raises money for LHS Best Buddies program

■ Jackie Kong
Staff Writer

From Nov. 5 to Nov. 15, Lexington High School students competed in the LHS dodgeball tournament, raising about $500 for the Best Buddies program.

Coordinated by senior Danny Spero and juniors David Herrera and Aaron Brosnan, the event featured 24 teams of six to 12 students, as well as one faculty team.

The tournament took place in the gym and field house. Teams faced off over four days of round-robin play followed by two more days of playoffs and a championship game. The playoffs involved a 16-team elimination bracket where teams that won two of three games moved on. In the semifinals, teams had to win three out of five games, while the championship title was determined by the best four out of seven.

Ultimately, senior Daniel Maffa led his team "Off In the Corner" to win the championship.

Spero initially came up with the idea of a fundraiser tournament in September. He had volunteered with Special Olympics previously and, realizing the importance of Best Buddies, said he wanted to organize a dodgeball tournament for students and teachers to enjoy the game while helping a good cause.

"Dodgeball is a social game," Spero said.

Others who helped run the tournament also thought the competition would be a fun way to get the LHS community involved.

"Playing dodgeball involves primal instincts [such as] picking up objects and throwing them," said Alexander Moschella, a junior and referee for the games. "That's why I think dodgeball is a great game for anyone and everyone to play because there is no skill involved."

Spero, Herrera and Brosnan spread awareness of the fundraiser by creating an event on Facebook and encouraging friends to spread the word. They were pleasantly surprised when many teams signed up.

Brosnan noted that one aspect of the tournament's success was the "interaction of underclassmen and upperclassmen, which is hard to do, as well as the involvement of all different social groups."

However, participants noted some aspects for future improvement.

Paige Campbell, a junior, pointed out the disproportionate ratio of male to female players in the tournament.

"It was fun, but it would've been better if more girls played on each team," she said. "There should be at least a 1:3 girl-to-boy ratio."

With such success this year, the trio of organizers hopes to see the tournament back again next year.

"[The LHS dodgeball tournament] used to be a yearly thing, and we're hoping to have a current freshman or sophomore continue the tradition when we graduate," said Herrera.

Many players seemed eager to participate in future tournaments.

"The tournament was very intense and a really good experience," said sophomore Gabe Ziabaitis. "I would play again next year for sure."

Girls' swim team ties for first in league

■ Laura Case
Stephanie Yin
Staff Writers

In the last relay's final seconds, Lexington High School's girls' swim team ended the season with a rare three-way championship tie with Belmont and Reading, the perennial league champions. Lexington beat Burlington to tie as Tri-League Champions.

At an earlier championship meet, Lexington lost to Reading, a team known for their exceptional swimming.

"I know that all of the girls were extremely disappointed after our loss to Reading, especially after we beat them at our league meet last year," senior member Emily Lowry wrote in an email.

However, Lexington beat Belmont, allowing another chance at first place.

"Belmont has really improved over the past year and took Reading by surprise with a win," wrote Karen Lin, a senior on the team, in an email. "We had just lost to Reading the week before and so beating Belmont was huge for us."

Because Reading and Lexington had lost only once, Lexington's win over previously undefeated Belmont put all three in a tie for first place in the league.

"There are 11 events and three of them are relays," wrote Lowry. "The 200 medley relay which is first, the 200 free relay which is in the middle of the meet and the 400 free relay which is the last event."

In the relay, eight points are awarded to first place, four points to second place and two points to third. Going into the final relay, Lexington was up by only two points, so it was vital for Lexington come first.

"It was a lot of pressure swimming in the last relay because we knew right before our swim that in order to win the meet we had to win this relay," wrote sophomore Madi Keohane.

Keohane, Erika Lu, Briony Waite and Jayne Vogelzang were the four swimmers in the last 400 relay of the championship.

"While I was swimming, I wasn't really thinking anything! I just kept seeing the girl next to me and knowing that we had to win," wrote Waite, a junior.

The final moments were an intense experience for the rest of the team as well.

"We were all rooting for each other and were really excited," wrote Lin. "The whole team went absolutely nuts! By the end of the meet, many of the girls had even lost their voices from cheering."

The 400 relay swimmers' first place finish propelled Lexington to victory.

"When the relay was over and we found out that we had won, we all just started jumping up and down and hugging each other," wrote Waite.

"It's Lexington's first title since 1994 so it's a pretty big deal. We're really proud of the girls this year," said senior and team manager Claire Chang.

The girls credit their coaches for much of the team's success.

"Both of our coaches, Ann and Chris, supported us the whole way," wrote Keohane. "We knew they believed in us. We just had to believe in ourselves that we could do it."

Photo courtesy of Spencer Kofoed

Spencer Kofoed, a senior, skis in the Macomber Cup Slalom at Proctor Ski Area in Andover, N.H., on Feb. 4, 2012.

Offbeat Athlete: Kofoed dedicates time to improve skiing, strengthen skills

■ Claire Huang
Staff Writer

Clear blue skies and hills of snow create a scene familiar to the many locals who enjoy skiing New England's pristine slopes. But Spencer Kofoed, a senior at Lexington High School, has taken this traditional winter sport to the next level.

Kofoed currently attends Waterville Valley Academy in the heart of the White Mountains of New Hampshire. The school offers a five-month snowsport and academic program for middle to high school students seeking professional training in alpine racing, freestyle skiing and snowboarding. For Kofoed, racing is his talent and passion.

"My favorite types of trails are long and have a steep pitch with hard snow, but I like to take my chances in the woods if there is enough powder," he wrote in an email.

On some days when snow conditions prevent him from racing, Kofoed enjoys skiing powder and in the terrain park to take a break from racing.

Although he started skiing at a very young age, Kofoed said that, surprisingly, little interested him about the sport at first.

"I actually hated the snow and would freak out when I was put outside to play in it," he wrote. His early experiences certainly form a stark contrast with his current skiing career and training regime during the winter months.

According to Kofoed, a typical day at the Waterville Valley Academy starts at 7:30 a.m. with academic classes that last until lunchtime at 12:15 p.m. After lunch, student athletes go up to the mountain and

[OFFBEAT, page 7]